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SENSITIVE  
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DEPT FOR GEORGIA MONITORING GROUP AND EUR/CARC

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [RU](#) [GG](#)  
SUBJECT: GEORGIA: SITREP 27: SARKOZY IN TBILISI, OSCE MAKES  
NO PROGRESS WITH RUSSIANS

REF: TBILISI 1527

1. (SBU) Summary. Russian General Kulakhmetov canceled a September 8 meeting with OSCE to discuss access beyond Russian checkpoints. Opposition leader Shalva Natelashvili called for the resignation of the current Georgian leadership. The two Polish television news crew members detained on September 8, have been released. French President Nicolas Sarkozy arrived in Tbilisi for talks with Georgian President Saakashvili to discuss the Russian agreement to withdraw troops from Georgia proper, allow for an international mechanism to monitor the withdrawal and plans for an international discussion of future of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. End Summary.

OSCE: NO PROGRESS WITH THE RUSSIANS  
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2. (SBU) Russian General Kulakhmetov canceled a September 8 meeting to discuss access beyond Russian checkpoints. The OSCE is trying again to see him September 9 to discuss the apparent new requirement of prior notification for all OSCE movements beyond Russian checkpoints (see reftel). OSCE contacts called this new requirement "unacceptable," especially in light of the proposed enlargement of the OSCE presence, and will likely protest at a more senior level if they are unable to make progress with Kulakhmetov.

CALL ON GEORGIAN LEADERS TO RESIGN  
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3. (SBU) On September 8, Labor Party leader and noted publicity hound Shalva Natelashvili declared that Georgia will only be able to overcome its present crisis if the current leadership resigns. "The only way out of the current situation is to change the government peacefully, or to be more precise, to have the authorities resign," he stated at a news conference. Natelashvili, who has been sitting on the proverbial fence regarding his own seat in Parliament, called for a new government that is neither pro-Russian nor pro-U.S. to come to power. He also stated that Georgia has become a victim of Russian aggression and a casualty of the rivalry between Russia and the United States. Post notes that Natelashvili may have received funding for the Labor Party from Russian sources.

POLISH JOURNALISTS RELEASED  
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4. (SBU) On September 8, two Polska Television crew members were detained north of the Karaleti checkpoint in Georgia proper, but South Ossetian-held territory. An apparent South Ossetian militia detained the two journalists. At approximately 1030 on September 9, the two members were released to the Polish Consul and the OSCE by the Russian military. The Committee to Protect Journalists publicly

decried the illegal detainment of international journalists in Georgian territory.

SARKOZY-SAAKASHVILI MEET IN TBILISI

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15. (SBU) On September 8, French President Sarkozy arrived to Tbilisi from Moscow along with the President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso and EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana. The meeting did not begin until after 10 pm, and Sarkozy and Saakashvili held a press conference at 1 am on September 9. According to the press, Saakashvili presented Sarkozy with evidence alleging Georgia did not start the war. Sarkozy presented Saakashvili with the text of a document worked out in Moscow regarding the withdrawal of Russian forces from Poti and Senaki within one week and from the rest of Georgia proper by October 10; the implementation of the international mechanisms to monitor the withdrawal, and plans for an international conference on the future of the separatist regions. Further details on the meeting are reported septel.

TEFFT